

Notes and Observations

CONFIRMATION OF *EREBIA EPIPHRON* KNOCH: MOUNTAIN RINGLET AS IRISH. — In the course of seeking references on Irish Lepidoptera and Orthoptera, I noticed a report by Kane on the occurrence of *E. epiphron* which appears to have been overlooked by recent authors. The reference is: Kane, W. F. de Vismes, 1912. Clare Island Survey — Lepidoptera. *Proc. Royal Irish Acad.* XXXI.

Kane's short comment (*op. cit.*) reads: "Visits to Croaghpatrick were made during the first half of June in 1909 and 1910 in the hope of again finding the alpine butterfly *Erebia epiphron*, recorded by Birchall in 1854; but though the locality indicated by him was carefully and exhaustively examined by Mr. Wyse and myself, no specimen was seen. The sunless weather and chilly wind probably account for our failure. My capture of a specimen on Nephin on 9th June, 1897, however, proves its survival on the Mayo mountains, but it only flies in bright sunshine".

The above is important when considering that Redway's criticism of Kane's record (see D. B. Redway, *Ent. Gaz.* 32: 157-159) is based on the lack of knowledge of the date and capture of the Nephin specimen. — J. PAUL, 45 Beaufort Crescent, Stoke Gifford, Bristol BS12 6QY. [Although Kane only took one specimen, he saw more (see his *Cat. Lep. Ireland*, 155). The date is also interesting as being some three weeks earlier than that of the English and Scottish races. Owing to lack of information on this point, attempts by others since at re-discovering it in Ireland may have been undertaken too late in the season. — J.M.C.-H.]

WHY "WYPONOMEUTA"? — Latreille coined the generic name *Yponomeuta* from the Greek verb "hyponomeuein", to undermine, drawing attention to the supposed larval habit of mining in roots (the only species to do so is *stannella* Thunberg which has now been placed in *Euhyponomeuta*!). As a Frenchman, Latreille did not pronounce the initial "H" and dropped it on paper too. This shocked his contemporaries and Sodoffsky accordingly "corrected" the spelling, his amendment being adopted by subsequent authors (Stainton, Meyrick, etc.). Then came the rule that original spelling must be used even if it contains an obvious mistake, provided, of course, that it is pronounceable. *Yponomeuta* is easy to pronounce whether you make the first syllable rhyme with lip (as, I suspect is nearer to Latreille's intention) or eye as is the more common practice today. Yet about a year ago someone started saying "Wyponomeuta". Like all bad habits, it caught on although it is etymological nonsense; before we know where we are, an idyll will become a widdle and a whore a wore.

Incidentally, if original spelling has to be followed, why is not the family name Hyponomeutidae, since that is how Stainton first